

Armor and Shields

A Basic Fantasy RPG Supplement

Release 3

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Basic Fantasy Website: basicfantasy.org

INTRODUCTION

This supplement provides additional armor and shields for play under the Basic Fantasy Role-Playing Game rules. If you do not already have a copy of the Basic Fantasy RPG rules, please visit the website and download a copy.

The tables below provide an expanded range of armor and shields for use in the game. Availability of these additional items is at the discretion of the Game Master, of course.

Unless otherwise specified, a suit of armor takes 10 rounds minus the character's Dexterity bonus to put on or take off.

Armor is often made of differing materials, especially shields. Some Plate Armor is made of bronze or possibly some other alloy, though it is most commonly made of steel. Differing materials and their effect on weight, cost and AC is beyond the scope of this document. Game Masters are encouraged to make these adjustments as they see fit while adhering to the simple and basic nature of the Basic Fantasy RPG.

It is safe to assume that Armor which weighs 25 or less pounds is considered "Light" and armor that weighs 50 or more pounds is considered "Heavy". Any armor that falls within those bounds may be considered "Medium".

Armor

Armor Type	Cost	Weight	AC
No Armor	0 gp	0	11
Padded	15 gp	10	12
Hide	10 gp	30	13
Leather	20 gp	15	13
Studded Leather	30 gp	25	14
Ring Mail	25 gp	30	14
Chain Mail	60 gp	40	15
Scale Mail	80 gp	55	16
Splint Mail	100 gp	45	16
Plate Mail	300 gp	50	17
Field Plate Mail	500 gp	70	18
Full Plate Mail	1500 gp	80	19

Shields

Shield Type	Cost	Weight	AC Bonus	Melee/Missile
Buckler	5 gp	2		+1/0
Medium Shield	7 gp	7		+1/+1
Tower Shield	15 gp	12		+1/+3

Armor Descriptions

Padded Armor is created from layers of cloth placed on top of each other. It is often ceremonial, being not much use, but does offer minimal amounts of protection. The layers of cloth are great for winter months because they provide solid insulation, but often get very sweaty and dirty unless properly laundered with frequency.

Hide Armor is much like leather in its working and protection. Often hide armor can be found in remote areas or barbaric lands; it is the most common type used by orcs and many other humanoids. The process of creating hide armor involves curing the beast's hide and sewing it to clothing. It is often hot and itchy, but offers protection similar to regular leather armor.

Leather Armor consists of pieces of hardened and/or layered leather. There are a variety of methods for creating this armor, most of which involve boiling, shaping, then stiffening the armor. The leather pieces are sewn to a cloth undergarment for maximum flexibility.

Studded Leather Armor is similar to regular leather armor, but instead of hardening the leather, metal studs and/or small plates are riveted to it. The studs coupled with the leather material provide added protection from attacks at the slight cost of mobility.

Ring Mail Armor consists of rings of steel directly sewn to an undergarment. The rings themselves offer great flexibility and decent protection. The underlying garment is usually a soft and supple leather which can withstand mild punishment.

Chain Mail Armor consists of rings of metal that are interwoven, rather than being stitched to a leather garment. Chain mail is worn over a padded undergarment (see Padded Armor, above); if worn without the padded undergarment, chain mail armor provides an Armor Class of 13 at a weight of 30 pounds. Chain mail is very flexible and durable. It is one of the most popular and affordable armors available to player characters. Chain mail may be made either in the form of a suit (i.e. tunic and trousers) or in the form of a hauberk, which consists of a tunic with a skirt or kilt to protect the legs.

Scale Mail Armor is made of metal scales directly woven to an undergarment that offers flexibility and moderate protection.

Splint Mail Armor is a form of chain mail where small strips of thick metal are interwoven amongst the rings of the mail. These small embedded plates offer excellent coverage and thicker protection than regular Chain Mail at the price of additional weight and less flexibility.

Plate Mail Armor is another common form of metal armor. Large plates of hard metal are fashioned to cover the torso, arms and legs and attached at the joints to an underlying suit of chain mail; a padded undergarment (see Padded Armor, above) is worn underneath. If plate mail is worn without the undergarment, the armor class provided is 15 at a weight of 40 pounds. The individual pieces of the plate mail have specific names, as follows:

Breastplate – covers the chest and back of the wearer. This is also sometimes called a cuirass. The breastplate is the largest part of the armor and weighs about 16 lbs.

Faulds – worn below the breastplate to cover the waist and hips. The faulds weigh around 10 lbs.

Tassets – worn on the thighs. Tassets compromise approximately 8 lbs. of the overall weight of the armor.

Greaves – worn on the shins. A pair of greaves usually weighs about 4 lbs.

Pauldrons – worn on the shoulders. Pauldrons, on average, weigh about 6 lbs.

Vambraces – worn on the forearms. Vambraces generally weigh about 4 lbs.

Gauntlets – worn on the hands. Gauntlets only weigh around 2 lbs.

Field Plate Armor consists of solid pieces of plate armor, fastened together with a variety of complicated sliding parts, hinges, and straps. Small pieces of chain mail are used to cover hard-to-protect joints, such as behind the knees and under the arms. Field plate armor provides greater protection than regular plate mail with a relatively small increase in weight, but must be custom fitted to the wearer; this generally means that a character purchasing this sort of armor must wait at least a full week between placing the order and receiving the finished suit. Field plate armor is worn over a padded undergarment (see Padded Armor, above), and if worn without the undergarment, the Armor Class provided is 17 at a weight of 60 pounds.

Full Plate Armor is generally identical to field plate armor, but is of superior design and manufacture; only an expert armorer can fashion it. The plates cover the wearer more fully, and chain mail is generally not used at all. Also, the plates themselves are designed to deflect weapon strikes away from any otherwise-vulnerable joint in the armor. Those who wear Full plate suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls

due to limited mobility while wearing the armor. Full plate cannot be put on alone and takes at least 1 turn to get into with assistance.

Shield Descriptions

A **buckler** is a small shield worn on the forearm to block incoming attacks. It is usually about a foot in diameter. The wearer of a buckler receives +1 to his or her Armor Class when in melee combat, but gains no protection against missile fire. Bucklers may be used by those wielding two weapons, as described in the Combat Options supplement; if this is done, the character may either attack with the off-hand weapon or gain the benefit of the shield.

A **medium shield** is usually about 3 feet in diameter and is often round, though shields may come in a variety of shapes. A medium shield is worn by looping one's arm through a strap and then grabbing a handle of some sort on the backside of the shield. A medium shield will give the wearer +1 AC in both melee and missile situations; in other words, this is the "standard" shield as described in the Core Rules.

A **tower shield** is a very large shield that is almost the height of the wearer; such a shield is generally rectangular, but oval, elliptical, and curved shapes are not uncommon. Because of the bulky and cumbersome nature of such a large shield, it only offers protection similar to a medium shield while in melee (+1) yet gives superior protection against missile fire (+3) due to its size.

Optional Rules

Piecemail Armor

In some instances, a Game Master may wish to allow characters to piece together the various parts of Plate Armor to create a customized appearance or for some other purpose. This is known as **Piecemail Armor**. For every two pieces of Plate Mail Armor, other than the breastplate, a character may add +1 to his AC, up to a total bonus of +3. The character cannot gain more than +3 AC. Note: a "piece" of plate mail encompasses both the right and left hand side of the respective part. A single vambrace is not considered a "piece" until a second vambrace accompanies it. A breastplate may only be worn over padded armor and offers a +2 bonus to AC.

For example: Thorus the dwarven fighter currently wears chain mail. He finds a suit of Dwarven Plate Mail while exploring an abandoned mine, but one of the gauntlets and the breastplate is missing. He straps on the greaves, tassets, pauldrons, vambraces and faulds. Five full pieces have been strapped on, thus raising the Dwarf's overall armor class to 17. This also increases the overall weight of his armor by 32 lbs. to a total of 72 lbs. which is heavier than Plate due to overlapping the Plate Mail pieces with the chain mail pieces.

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